

Council Connection

Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council

empowerment • opportunity • inclusion

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September 2015

Federal and state laws support children with disabilities (to the greatest extent possible) to be taught side-by-side their peers without disabilities in school.

In our "Back-to-School" issue, we provide information and resources to help parents and educators advocate for an inclusive, supportive and successful education for students with disabilities. Need advice now for your transitioning youth? Lynne Pattison, parent of a recently transitioned youth and member of the DD Council, shares parent-to-parent advice on lessons learned.

The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council wishes all students an inclusive, positive, and successful school year!

Inclusive Education Supports Successful Transitions: 10 Tips, 4 Myths & Advice from a Parent Advocate

[10 Tips for a Successful School Year](#)

Find [these ten tips](#) at wrightslaw.com. You can also find additional information about special education law and advocacy for children with disabilities.

[Debunking 4 Myths about Inclusive Education](#)

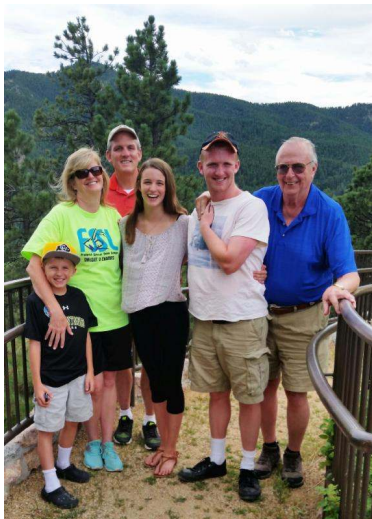
What does inclusion really mean? Blogger and inclusive educator Lisa Friedman dispels 4 common misunderstandings about inclusive education and teaches us how every child can succeed in school.



[Transition to Employment for Young Adults with Disabilities](#): What We (as parents and community supporters) Can Do to Ensure Success

Parent advocate Mary Hartley says: "If you want your child to work, they must get out into the world - school, outside activities, and the community at large. One of the best preparations for adult success is inclusion." Read the rest of her advice in this blog!

Transitioning Youth: One parent's lessons learned



Cole with family hiking in the Rockies

Cole, now 20, was diagnosed with autism at age 3. Cole's mom and DD Council member Lynne Pattison says that all students with or without disabilities should be asking and exploring the same question: ***"What do I want to do with my life?"***

To help teens with disabilities answer that question, Lynne suggests the following:

- 1) **Starting early**-- even *before* age 14 when transitioning youth services begin in school.
- 2) Learn the difference between [the Developmental Disabilities Administration \(DDA\)](#) and [the Division of Rehabilitation Services \(DORS\)](#).

3) **Attend every transition fair and workshop**

the school system offers! Information on transition and transition fairs provided by [Family Support Services](#) personnel officed in every County Public School system.

3) **Be prepared to get involved!** Make the time, ask questions, and understand how services will change once your TY leaves the school system [\(entitlement vs. eligibility\)](#).

Lynne's wish list? Lynne said it would be helpful if there was an at a glance, one page flowchart and timeline to help parents plan for and be involved in their youth's transition. She adds, "I'd like to see better coordination between these agencies during the qualification process. It'd be nice to have a single entry point for all the systems because it is overwhelming."

A note from the DD Council: The Maryland State Department of Education is working on a quick at a glance timeline for the transition process--stay tuned! In the meantime, is your child still in elementary school? Take Lynne's advice! [MD Learning Links](#) has all you need to know about how to prepare your child now for success in the transition years that begin officially at 14.

For even more easy to access information to prepare your transitioning youth for success, explore www.mdtransition.org.

New Webinar Series!

Sponsored by The Maryland Developmental Disabilities Council and The Arc Maryland



A series of webinars providing tools, information, and ideas for people with developmental disabilities and their families to improve quality of life and effect change

September 24

Making Inclusive Child Care a Reality

Register now by clicking on the time most convenient to you!

[12:00 - 1:00 p.m.](#)

or

[7:00 - 8:00 p.m.](#)

[Click here for more information about these upcoming webinars in the series:](#)

Thursday October 15

Post Secondary Options for Transitioning Youth: What's next after high school?

Thursday November 19

Achieving a Better Life Experience (ABLE): New opportunities to save for disability-related expenses

**Find additional resources to meet your advocacy and information needs here:
<http://www.md-council.org/resources/national-state-resources/>**

info@md-council.org | <http://www.md-council.org>

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